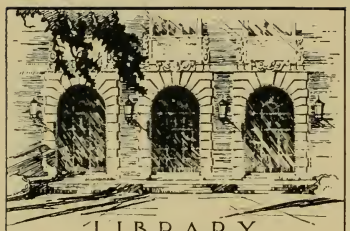

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Union or Separation?

WITH SOME REMARKS UPON

Numbers 1 and 2 of the New Series of S. Giles's Lectures.

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Union or Separation?

WITH SOME REMARKS UPON NUMBERS 1 AND 2 OF THE NEW SERIES OF S. GILES'S LECTURES.

IT is some comfort to think that the champions of Episcopacy and Presbytery have now come to understand both their own and each other's positions better than they did, for the most part, in former times. For instance, it is now seen, by at least the more intelligent of them, that the question in dispute is one—not of *words* or *names* (which had no fixed signification, or no signification corresponding to that which they now bear,* until towards the end of the Scriptural and Apostolic period) but—of *offices* and *orders* or degrees. It is now seen that nothing is gained towards the settlement of the question by pointing to texts such, for instance, as Acts xx. 28 and Titus i. 5-7, where the Greek words for *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are used as equivalent, or at least as applicable to the same person and the same office; or to texts such as Phil. i. 1 and i. Tim. iii. 2-8, where the mention of only two orders, under the names of *Bishops* and *Deacons*, does not exclude the existence of a third in the *Apostle*, who was the writer of the Epistle, or in Timothy, the

* See my "Outlines of the Christian Ministry," pp. 149-160, and "Remarks on Dr. Lightfoot's Essay," p. 44, note 2.

person addressed. No competent scholar now supposes that our English word "Bishop," which, in ordinary use, has *always* meant one in the first order of a three-fold ministry, is—though derived from ἐπίσκοπος—a *proper* translation for it in the New Testament; any more than our English word "Emperor," though derived from *Imperator*, would be a proper translation for it, when applied to a General of the Roman Commonwealth such as Pompey or Sulla. It is now at least beginning to be recognised that the main point to be determined is whether the Episcopate, as we now understand the name and office (implying a distinct order, higher than that of Presbyters) was developed, from whatever cause, out of the Presbyterate during the Apostles' lifetime; or whether it sprung entirely out of the Apostolate by natural, and divinely intended and ordained, descent. The importance of this point will be perceived at once. If during the life of the Apostles it was competent for Presbyters to effect the continuation of the ministry without the intervention of a superior order, it is plain there can be nothing wrong in their resuming that power at a subsequent period; nay, it may be fairly pleaded that, in the absence of any express Divine or Apostolic injunction to the contrary, they would be bound to do so, in case it should appear that the addition of a superior office had failed to confer the advantages expected from it. And further, among those who have doubts upon the latter point—that is, whether the good or the evil arising out of the superadded Episcopate had preponderated—there would be room for the plea that either system might be adopted, according to the opinion entertained of the superior benefits derived from each.

This, I believe, is the view which the champions of Presbytery are now inclined to take. They think that they see a period, within the lifetime of some at least of the Apostles, when the government of the Church (including the propagation of the ministry) was actually, in many places, in the hands of bodies of Presbyters; and that no

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provision had been made, or injunction given, to prevent them from carrying it on as they, the said bodies of Presbyters, might see fit and most expedient. At the same time it is not denied by our Presbyterian friends that *it was not long* before it was found expedient to adopt what eventually became an Episcopal regimen.

In order to give greater substance to this view, it would be well if we could find some instance of a Church originally carrying on its government in the manner supposed, that is, by Presbyters; as we see Presbyterian government carried on among ourselves at the present time; if, for instance, we could discover some genuine instances of *ordination conferred by Presbyters only*, or some instances of *clerical discipline administered by them*. But the only cases that have been produced do not amount to this. They are merely negative as against the necessity of Episcopacy. Such is the case of the Church of Corinth, when Clement, writing in the name of the Church at Rome, addressed to it his first epistle; and the case of the Church of Philippi, when Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, addressed to it his epistle. In both cases there is no evidence of a settled Church government of *any* kind. Now, we want something more than this; and, I may add, more than the bare, unsupported assertions of Pseudo-Ambrose (now generally believed to be Hilary, the Roman Deacon) and Jerome, both writing about *three centuries* afterwards, to place against *the full stream of historical testimony* on the other side. We want not only to *suppose*, but to *see*, in some form or other, a Presbytery in action, as we see them nowadays. We do not see it at Jerusalem—so I venture to maintain against my friend Professor Mitchell (see his "Lecture," p. 16, and compare my "Outlines," pp. 58-70, and "Remarks on Dr. Lightfoot," pp. 19-32);—we do not see it at Ephesus; we do not see it in Crete; we do not see it in any one of the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse: whereas, on the other hand, when we see a Bishop, or *quasi*-Bishop, like James at Jerusalem, and

Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus in Crete, we see, to some extent at least, Episcopal administration actually going on; and in the cases of Crete and Ephesus, we see an Apostle giving full and express directions for its exercise. But we see no such directions given in the case of any Presbytery. The Presbyters addressed by S. Paul, Acts xx. 28, and by S. Peter, i Ep. v. 2, are directed to exercise their *overseership* only, as it would seem, *in their respective flocks*.

I have spoken of *the full stream of historical testimony*. Let me shew what I mean. In order to do this in the clearest manner, let me quote from a book, not generally known, I fear, in this country, but regarded by all scholars as of the highest possible authority; a book not written for any ecclesiastical purpose, still less with any ecclesiastical bias, but simply to present a complete view of *matters of fact* in their chronological order during the period over which the work extends. I allude to THE FASTI of MR. FYNES CLINTON, published by the Clarendon Press, Oxford, in 5 vols. 4to; and more particularly to vol. ii., appendix of the second portion of it, entitled FASTI ROMANI, *the Civil and Literary Chronology of Rome and Constantinople*, 1850. In chapter ix., headed "Bishops of Rome, Alexandria, &c.," p. 534, we read as follows:—

"Eusebius supplies materials for the years and successions of the Bishops down to his own time [A.D. 325]. The lists of Nicephorus continue the series for some centuries longer, and supply valuable information, although in the years assigned to each Episcopate they are sometimes erroneous through the mistake of Nicephorus himself, and sometimes corrupted through the fault of the transcriber.

ROME.	ALEXANDRIA.	ANTIOCH.	JERUSALEM.
1. Linus [A.D. 65]*			[1. S. James]†
2. Anacletus	1. Annianus 63	1. Euodius [43]	2. Simeon [69]‡
3. Clemens	2. Abilius, 85		

* F. Clinton does not give the date in this list, but he gives it in vol. i., p. 177. I have therefore placed it within brackets.

† This name is not given by Clinton in this list (though he prefixes the number 2 to the name of Simeon), but it is given at p. 556. It is therefore introduced here, but within brackets.

‡ See *ibid.*

ROME.	ALEXANDRIA.	ANTIOCH.	JERUSALEM.
4. Euarestus	3. Cerdon, 98	2. Ignatius [70]	3. Justus [108]
5. Alexander	4. Primus, 109		4. Sacchæus
		3. Heros	
			5. Tobias
			6. Benjamin
			7. Joannes
			8. Matthias
6. Xystus, 117	5. Justus, 120		9. Philippus
			10. Seneca
			11. Justus
			12. Levi
			13. Ephraim
			14. Joseph
			15. Judas
7. Telephorus, 127	6. Eumenes, 131	4. Cornelius, 129	16. Marcus, 136
8. Hyginus, 138			17. Cassianus
9. Pius, 142	7. Marcus, 143	5. Eros, 143	18. Publius
			19. Maximinus
			20. Julianus
10. Anicetus, 150	8. Celadion, 153		21. Gaius
			22. Synmachus
			23. Gaius
11. Soter, 162			24. Julianus
			25. Capeto
			26. Maximus
			27. Antoninus
12. Eleutherus, 171	9. Agrippinus, 168	6. Theophilus, 171	28. Valens
	10. Julianus, 180	7. Maximus i., 183	29. Dolichianus
13. Victor, 185	11. Demetrius, 190	8. Serapion, 190	30. Narcissus
			31. Dius
			32. Germanio
			33. Gordianus
14. Zephyrinus		9. Asclepiades, 203	Narcissus again
15. Callistus I., 217		10. Philetus, 218	34. Alexander, 214 "

Here, at the opening of the 3rd Century, I venture to stop; though Fynes Clinton carries on the lists—with the addition of Constantinople from A.D. 326—till the time when his work closes, *i.e.*, at the death of the Emperor Justin II., towards the end of the 7th Century; the last names which he gives being :—

In the *Roman* succession, 77, Adeodatus, A.D. 672 ;
In the succession of *Alexandria*, 48, Cyrus, A.D. 630 ;

In the succession of *Antioch*, 61, Anastasius, A.D. 599;
In the succession of *Jerusalem*, 61, Sophronius, A.D. 633;
In the succession of *Constantinople*, 40, Constantinus, A.D. 674.

No attempt has ever been made to overthrow the historical authority of these catalogues of Bishops in the five principal sees of Christendom, any more than to overthrow the historical authority of the contemporaneous catalogues of Roman Emperors and Consuls. And the fact that the places themselves were also the five principal cities of the then civilised world, adds greatly to the importance of the testimony which they give upon the form and character of the Christian ministry as originally founded. But more than this: the same testimony forces us to doubt whether the notion which Professor Milligan so broadly states at the beginning of his Lecture, viz., that with the death of the last of the Apostles, at the end of the 1st Century, "The Church entered upon a new period of her existence;" that "no transition so momentous has taken place at any other period of her progress;" that she was now "to be compelled to solve for herself the innumerable problems meeting her in every aspect alike of *her internal economy* and her relation to the world;"—we are forced, I say, to doubt whether this notion, if not altogether visionary, is not, to say the least, greatly exaggerated. Unhappily the said notion is almost a necessity of the Presbyterian theory. It takes for granted that because we have no inspired or canonical record, no "Acts of the Apostles," to tell us what they severally did just before and during "the last three decades" of the 1st Century, therefore, they did nothing during all that time to provide for the future; to anticipate the arrangements to be made after their deaths; to give directions for the solving of the "problems" supposed, especially in regard to "internal economy;"—whereas S. Clement, in his first epistle, c. 44, very plainly assures us of the contrary. But apart from that express assurance, when we

have seen Rome, and Alexandria, and Antioch, and Jerusalem, doubtless with full Apostolic sanction, all provided with Bishops, even before the period just now named (*i.e.*, before A.D. 70), we may, I think, rest satisfied that there was no such violent "transition" to be encountered at S. John's death, but that authoritative guidance upon all important points had been already given to the Church long before; and that this guidance was followed with quite as much "simplicity and confidence" of faith—in some instances, let us hope, considerably more—than, for instance, the Churches of Corinth or of Galatia had exhibited towards S. Paul himself.

But there is another argument which tends greatly to impair the credibility of the view before stated—viz., that there was a time when, in some at least of the early Churches, the ministry and the government were carried on by Presbyters. The argument to which I refer is well known as having been put very forcibly by Chillingworth; and I am rather surprised that neither of our Presbyterian friends, whose lectures embrace the Apostolic and post-Apostolic period to which it applies, has taken any notice of it. His object was to prove that "Episcopacy is not repugnant to the government settled in the Church for perpetuity by the Apostles;" and availing himself of the concession made by "two great defenders of Presbytery," viz., Beza and Peter du Moulin, that "Episcopal government was received universally in the Church presently after the Apostles' time," Chillingworth argues that "between *the Apostles' time* and this *presently after* there was not time enough for, nor possibility of, so great an alteration" as from Presbytery to Episcopacy; and he concludes, "Therefore there was no such alteration as is pretended." Now, let us transfer this argument of Chillingworth to the concessions, similar to those of Beza and Du Moulin, made by Dr. Lightfoot, now Bishop of Durham, in his famous Dissertation on the Christian Ministry —a production of which our Presbyterian friends have

availed themselves, it must be said, rather more than they were entitled to do.* Doubtless they would find in it statements which look highly favourable to their cause. For instance:—"The Episcopate, properly so called, would seem to have been developed from the subordinate office," p. 194. Again:—"These notices indicate that the solution suggested by the history of the word 'Bishop,' and its transference from the lower to the higher office, is the true solution, and the Episcopate was created out of the Presbytery," p. 225; where of course we are to understand that this was done, not by any superior authority, as of the Apostles, but by the Presbytery itself. And again:—"It is plainly competent for the Church at any given time to entrust a particular office with larger powers, as the emergency may require," p. 242; where, in the margin, we find as follows:—"The power of the Bishops a question of practical convenience." All this, as I have said, looks highly favourable to the Presbyterian cause; and we cannot wonder that, coming from such a quarter, it has been made the most of. But then, on the other hand, in the same Dissertation, we also find statements such as these:—"History seems to shew decisively that *before the middle of the 2nd Century* EACH CHURCH or Christian community had its three orders of ministers—its Bishops, its Presbyters, and its Deacons. *On this point there cannot reasonably be two opinions*," p. 184. And again:—"Unless we have recourse to a sweeping condemnation of received documents, it seems vain to deny that *early in the 2nd Century* the Episcopal office was firmly and widely established. Thus during the last three decades of the 1st Century, and consequently during the lifetime of the last surviving Apostle, this change [*i.e.*, from Presbytery

* In the preface to the sixth edition of his "Dissertation," published after he became Bishop of Durham, Dr. Lightfoot informs his readers that, while he disclaims any change in his opinions (and consequently reprints his Essay exactly as it appeared before), he desires "equally to disclaim the representations of those opinions which have been put forth in some quarters." It is impossible not to regret that no more distinct description is given of the representations thus disclaimed.

to Episcopacy] must have been brought about," p. 199. But this is precisely what Chillingworth could not persuade himself to think credible or possible to have taken place. "When I shall see," he writes, "all the fables of the Metamorphosis acted, and prove true stories; when I shall see all the Democracies and Aristocracies in the world lie down, and sleep, and awake into Monarchies; then will I begin to believe that Presbyterian Government. having continued in the Church during the Apostles' times, should presently after * . . . . be whirled about like a scene in a masque, and transformed into Episcopacy" (Chillingworth's Works, vol. ii., p. 490). This, I must repeat, is what an acute reasoner like Chillingworth could not bring himself to believe. And yet this is what our learned friends, the two first lecturers in the new S. Giles' series, appear to maintain. They would fain persuade their readers that Presbyterianism was tried—and tried with the advantage of Apostolic sanction, or at least of Apostolic toleration; tried generally, if not universally, throughout the Christian communities of the Gentile Churches;—and yet it is admitted that not a vestige of it was to be found after the lapse of a short period; or, if it is attempted to extend the time, let us say, at all events, *when the first General Council was held at Nicæa, A.D.* 325, *and attended by* 318 *Bishops from all parts of the civilised world.* No, we ourselves think better of the Presbyterian system, as organised even by Calvin and Andrew Melville, than to believe this. The powers of vitality and of growth which it has exhibited since its first origin in the 16th Century forbid us to suppose that, if it had ever enjoyed the fair and favourable start assigned to it in the 1st

* I omit the parenthesis of the original, viz., "against the Apostles' doctrine and the will of Christ," because that is a point scarcely, if at all, raised in Bishop Lightfoot's argument. He leaves out of sight the question of a *jus divinum* in any sense, until he comes to the conclusion of his Essay, where we find these words, certainly rather more than we had been led to expect:—"If the preceding investigation be substantially correct, the threefold ministry can be traced to *Apostolic direction;* and, short of an express statement, we can possess no better assurance of *a divine appointment*, or, at least, *a divine sanction*," p. 265.

Century, it could have disappeared so utterly as no where to have left any plain or trustworthy traces of its existence in the history of the early Church. I say "no plain or trustworthy traces of its existence;" for I cannot accept as such the crude and unsupported assertions of Pseudo-Ambrose or of Jerome—writing, as I before mentioned, towards the close of the 4th Century. And the absence of all such proof, and of any contemporary, or nearly contemporary, record in which the supposed change is noticed or alluded to, is the more conclusive, because we cannot imagine it would everywhere have been carried through without opposition—opposition which must have found some place in the annals of the time; especially when we remember what the character of the time was. Dr. Milligan has justly described it as follows:—"Enquiry was excited; historical investigation was promoted; critical skill was cultivated; powers of reasoning were sharpened; capacity of forming a judgment was matured. During this period of the Church's history we are in the midst of no ignorant, superstitious, or credulous age: everything testifies to the contrary," p. 42.

To my own mind, the main value of Bishop Lightfoot's contribution to the controversy, upon which our differences in this country chiefly turn, consists in this: it shews that, in the judgment of one whose accurate and extensive learning, whose great abilities, and whose soundness and sincerity as a divine, are all equally beyond dispute, the cause of our Presbyterian brethren has more to rest upon than many on our side, with our natural prepossessions, have been or are prepared to admit. And he comes to the conclusion that, strong as the position of Episcopacy unquestionably is, "*the facts* do not allow us to unchurch other Christian communities differently organised," p. 265. I confess I do not like the word "unchurch." *Mendosum sonat.* It appears to me to have a faulty, illogical ring about it; but let that pass; we know what it means. And taken together with its context, both before and after,

it points sufficiently to a practical issue; unless indeed we are to abandon all thought of reconciliation between Episcopacy and Presbytery, which Dr. Milligan for one has publicly declared that he will not be content to do until it has been proved by experience to be altogether hopeless. The practical issue, then, is plainly such that it encourages us to ask:—*Can a reconciliation between Presbyterians and ourselves be effected upon the understanding that the adoption of the threefold ministry is eventually to be accepted as the basis of our agreement—the existing generation of Presbyterian clergy being left free to receive Episcopal ordination or not, at their own option;* and that in the meantime we are to work together with mutual respect, and with no unkind or unbrotherly disparagement of each other's position?* This is the course which, in my opinion, Christian prudence and Christian charity would alike combine to recommend; and, I will add, which the primitive Church, under similar circumstances, would, I believe, have been prepared to adopt: nor can I imagine any other whereby we can reasonably expect to obtain the inestimable benefits which a substantial union between ourselves and Presbyterians could not fail to confer, not only upon us both, but upon the country at large.

And from what Dr. Milligan has written, I am induced to hope that, in order to obtain those benefits, and not from any distrust in his own position (which, he has made abundantly clear, he does not entertain), he would not be averse to concur in such a scheme. It is true that, leaving the Apostolate altogether out of view, in a way which appears to us strange and unnatural,† he himself sees "a

* There can, I suppose, be no doubt whatever that, at the Restoration of the Monarchy and Episcopacy in 1660-1, a very large proportion of the clergy who had not received Episcopal ordination were allowed to remain in their parochial charges upon no other condition than that of acknowledging the office and authority of the Bishop of the Diocese. Dr. Grub writes:—"None of the Bishops, except Bishop Mitchell [of Aberdeen, who died early in 1663], insisted on re-ordaining ministers who had received only Presbyterian ordination, though they did not refuse to do so when asked," vol. iii., p. 215.

† In Acts xv. the repetition of the Greek article in the phrase translated "The Apostles and the Presbyters" is recognised by scholars as implying

divine fundamental basis" (p. 50) for the ministry in only *one order*, viz., that of Presbyters. At the same time, however, he does not hesitate to join with Dr. Sprott, who, extending the original basis so as to include the Deaconate, argues strongly in favour of *two orders*. This latter theory was fully noticed by me in my Charge for 1882; when I shewed, I believe, conclusively, that the arguments upon which Dr. Sprott had relied, and which Dr. Milligan has in part reproduced—arguments derived (1) from the *Apostolical Constitutions;* (2) from the teaching of mediæval canonists and schoolmen, seeking to depress the Episcopate, in order to exaggerate the power of the Pope; and (3) from the language used in the English, unreformed, *Formularies of Faith, put forth in the reign of King Henry VIII.*—that these arguments had no solid foundation to rest upon. That portion of my Charge was not reported in the secular newspapers, but only in *The Scottish Guardian*, and I conclude had not come under Dr. Milligan's notice. The drift of it was to point out that nothing is really gained by advocating a theory of *two orders;* for even those who, misled by mediæval teaching, had fallen into it, still insisted upon *three degrees*. For instance, Hooker, not yet fully emancipated from the terminology of the schoolmen (which Bishop Andrewes, *Opera Posthuma*, p. 182 *sqq.*, and others,* shortly afterwards exploded), writes thus in his Fifth Book:—"Touching the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the whole body of the Church being divided into laity and clergy, the clergy are either *Presbyters or*

two distinct classes of persons. Compare Mark xiv. 53. And the plain statement of so many of the Fathers that Bishops are successors, not of Presbyters, but of the Apostles, cannot, in our opinion, be set aside. For instance, Firmilian, Bishop of Cappadocian Cæsarea, writing A.D. 250, and Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, A.D. 254, both assert that Bishops succeeded the Apostles "vicariâ ordinatione," *i.e., by an ordination which placed them in the Apostles' room;*"—a testimony surely of far more value than that of Hilary (?) and Jerome, writing more than a century later.

* See also Bingham, book ii., ch. 1, sec. 1:—"This distinction between *order* and *degree*, though used by many of the schoolmen, for reasons of their own, was unknown to the antients, among whom the words *order, degree, office, power*, and *jurisdiction*, when they speak of the superiority of Bishops above Presbyters, mean but *one and the same thing.*"

Deacons," ch. 78, sec. 2; meaning to include Bishops under Presbyters, and regarding the consecration of the Eucharist as the *differentia* of the combined order. And yet the same Hooker, in that same chapter, also writes:—"It clearly appeareth by Holy Scripture that Churches Apostolic did know but *three degrees* in the power of ecclesiastical *order*; at the first, Apostles, Presbyters [called also *Episcopi*, with reference to their respective flocks], Deacons; afterwards, instead of Apostles, Bishops," *ibid.*, sec. 9. And, still more to the purpose, in his Seventh Book, the last of his great work which the author finished:—"No man is able to shew either Deacon or Presbyter ordained by Presbyters, and his ordination accounted lawful in any antient part of the Church," ch. 6, sec. 5. This I point out because it proves, as I observed before, that the terminology of *two orders*, supposing it to be justifiable, does not really help us in this discussion, so long as *the facts* we have to deal with are what they are. And so Dr. Milligan, notwithstanding his fundamental basis of only one order, fully admits the *very early* development, not only of the Diaconate from below, but of the Episcopate from above. For instance, he writes with remarkable emphasis:—"This much alone appears to be *certain*, that by the *very beginning of the 2nd Century* we have unequivocal traces of three classes of the ministry, known as Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons," p. 48. Just as Principal Tulloch wrote many years ago:—"Episcopacy as an *order* distinct from Presbyters has continued in the Church since the later age of S. John. *This is a simple matter of history which no candid enquirer can deny*" (Lecture "On the Study of the Confession of Faith," 1866). Now, whatever we may severally think of the ecclesiastical arrangements in existence during the previous period, which is confessedly *less known*, I take it for granted that none of us have any wish to separate ourselves from the received arrangements of the *early part of the 2nd Century;* so that for all practical purposes it would seem we are sufficiently agreed; if only we can be content

to drop the categorical assertion of claims on either side which the other side will not allow; and which it may be truly said that neither the Established Church of England on the one hand, nor the Established Church of Scotland (at its last settlement) on the other, has categorically asserted. In short, all that we plead for is that we should be allowed to "cling tenaciously," as Bishop Lightfoot has exhorted us, in his sermon preached at Glasgow, October, 1882, "to the threefold ministry as *the completeness of the Apostolic ordinance, and the historical backbone of the Church*"; and that our National Church of Scotland should *eventually* revert to what would seem to have been (so far as can be ascertained) the Catholic practice from the beginning—viz., ordination by Bishops, with the assistance of Presbyters (or, in the words of Bishop Barry, "the Priests present taking a subsidiary part" *); and that Bishops should be consecrated to their office by other Bishops, as the earliest canons of the Church require, by a third ordination.†

And why do we plead for this? Not because we desire to cast any slur or suspicion upon the ministerial acts or character of our Presbyterian brethren: God forbid! To their own Master, and not to us, they must stand or fall; as we ourselves must stand or fall to the same Master. For my own part, I have quoted on more than one occasion the following words of the late Bishop of Cape Town (well known as a churchman of the straitest school of orthodoxy), in correspondence with the ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa:—"We do not dispute that your members receive through the Sacraments administered by you that which your Church leads them to expect they will receive; nor do we doubt that

* See "Teacher's Prayer Book," p. 396 (6); and compare Bingham, vol. i., p. 261, and vol. ix., p. 410.

† Dr. Milligan, p. 53, following Bishop Lightfoot, p. 227, would seem to place confidence in the words of Pseudo-Ambrose (Hilary, the Deacon, writing, if it be he, about the middle of the 4th Century):—"Episcopi et Presbyteri *una ordinatio* est; uterque enim sacerdos est." But is there any sufficient evidence to warrant the assertion? And is not the history and character of Hilary himself such as to raise a doubt? See my "Outlines," pp. 188 *sqq.*

the Holy Ghost works in the conversion of souls to God in and through your ministry. It would *in our judgment*" —Bishop Gray is writing, as Metropolitan, not only in his own name, but in that of the other South African Bishops —"*be sinful to doubt this.* Wherever there is godliness, there must be grace, and the Author of it." The writer of those words, and his Episcopal brethren who concurred in them, and of whom one was the present Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr. Cotterill, then of Graham's Town, *must have considered Presbyterian ordination valid;* though, doubtless, they would have objected to it as *irregular;* that is, as contrary to the ascertained rules of the Church from the beginning; which, if only on that account, must be regarded at least as undesirable. And so with us. The ground of our plea is not such as to *give* any reasonable offence to our Presbyterian brethren; though that there will be none to *take* offence at it upon both sides, is perhaps too much to hope. There is nothing uncharitable in it; nothing unbrotherly. On the contrary, its object is to remove offences, to promote charity, to cement brotherly love. But this cannot be done with any real effect unless we are to meet together for the public worship of our Heavenly Father; unless we are to communicate together in the sacrament of brotherly love instituted by our common Saviour in order that we might be made one in Him. And to expect that either of these results can be realised for the mass of our people until we can agree upon a common form of ministry, is, it need scarcely be said, vain and visionary. Am I wrong, then, when I add that the form of ministry which, all things considered, has the *strongest claims* upon our acceptance, cannot admit of a moment's doubt? To allege with Dr. Milligan, p. 45, that we are all so utterly at sea upon the question that "no branch of the Christian Church in existence at the present hour . . . is entitled to charge others with a greater departure than its own from the primitive organisation of the Christian community" (*i.e.*, when it was

really organised, and not merely in an embryo state)—this allegation, however charitably intended, appears to me to represent the case as far more intricate and difficult of adjustment than it really is; unless indeed all historical testimony is to be regarded as of no account.

Among the preliminary steps which might best and most easily be taken in the first instance, with a view to reconciliation, may be mentioned perhaps such as these:—The re-election of a Moderator, as tending to the discontinuance of annual change;* the opening of theological professorships to Episcopalian candidates; and the election to a Bishoprick of "a godly and well-learned" Presbyterian (such as could easily be named) who might be willing to accept the office. I heartily wish that my own successor may be such a one. If, in the West, Ambrose, when only a layman, was consecrated, A.D. 374, to the important see of Milan; and if, in the East, seven years afterwards, viz., A.D. 381, Nectarius, when not only no more than a layman, but, at the time of his appointment, even unbaptized, was consecrated to the still more important see of Constantinople; and if both consecrations took place with the full approval of the Church at the time and since; surely the veriest stickler for rigid ecclesiastical order could not reasonably object to such a deviation, as that now suggested, from the ordinary course under the peculiar circumstances in which the Church in this country is at present placed. It would be premature to enter upon further suggestions; but if any of my readers on either side are impatient for additional details, let me remind them that that good and learned man, the late Principal of the University of Aberdeen, Dr. Colin Campbell, has recorded his opinion that "*the admirable constitution* of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America"—a Church with which our

* For instances of such re-election, in the cases of Andrew Melville, Alexander Henderson, Robert Douglas, and William Carstairs, between 1578 and 1711, see my Charge for 1882, on "Prospects of Reconciliation," &c., p. 7.

Scotch Episcopal Church is in close communion—"combines the advantages of Presbytery and Episcopacy." On "Lay Eldership," p. 67.

Of the urgent call upon us, both Presbyterians and Episcopalians, to bring about, if possible, this reconciliation, through God's help, and of the benefits which could not fail to flow from it, if prudently and peaceably effected, it cannot be necessary to speak at length. It is true, Professor Mitchell, as "an old-fashioned Scotchman," gently ventures to hint that "the Church of his Fathers has got on very creditably and comfortably under its present system, and has been able to educate and train the nation entrusted to it as faithfully and well as the Church of any other land," p. 22. Far be it from me to attempt to disparage what the Presbyterian Established Church has done for this nation in the past, and is doing still; or to compare it, to its prejudice, with other Churches. But the learned Professor, living quietly in a university town, can scarcely be expected to realise, so fully as others who have to cope with them, the manifold discouragements and impediments which are thrown in the way of ministers of the Gospel from our "unhappy divisions." And certainly the estimate formed by many, even of his own brethren, differs materially from that which he has expressed. For instance, Principal Tulloch, who, if any man, knows (I should suppose) Scotland well, has long since testified that the Reformation in this country, "hardened," as it soon became, "into a Calvinistic creed and Presbyterian ritual," was not destined "to penetrate the old historical families of the kingdom;" consequently "it has failed to mould the nation—people, barons, and nobles—into a religious unity." See "Leaders of Reformation," p. 406, also p. 334. And more recently, in the "Contemporary Review":—"There are few wise Presbyterians who do not see weaknesses in their own system from the disuse of Episcopacy." Even the late Dean Stanley, in his sermon on "The Burning Bush," preached at Glasgow,

when, as he was addressing a congregation of Presbyterian ministers, so he spoke, for the most part, as one who appeared to be holding a brief for Presbyterianism, yet had the candour to avow that "the exclusive adoption of that form of organisation implied a want of insight into the more varied needs of human nature. . . . It was a return, so to speak, towards a usage which, because primitive, was *rude, undeveloped, and incomplete*, and which, therefore, the mind and practice of Christendom had long outgrown." Moreover, Professor Milligan has testified, still more recently:—"It is, to my mind, a matter of the utmost consequence"—to do what at present is not done, viz.—"to bring our landed proprietors and their tenantry and cottars together in the same Church. To effect this"—which at the same time he admits no one can reasonably even attempt to effect merely by calling upon Episcopalian landowners to become Presbyterians—"would be of the greatest benefit to both." And he adds:—"There is a sufficient amount of genuinely Christian and patriotic feeling among the landlords of Scotland to warrant the belief that nothing would be more grateful to them as a whole than that they and their dependents should, in the deepest and most wholesome of all bonds, be more united than they are." And then, if we look abroad to the great duty of evangelising the heathen, who can fail to appreciate the testimony of the late Dr. Norman M'Leod, given upon his return from India, to this effect—that Christianity in that country can never prosper if it is to represent the diversities and oppositions of our sects at home? Who can think without some feeling of shame and remorse that, in sending forth our ambassadors of the Gospel of Peace, we know that they will not go in the bond of peace and harmony among themselves, and consequently that they must not hope to obtain the full blessing upon their missionary work which only united councils and fellowship in action can reasonably expect from the Prince of Peace? Moreover, it surely is not "creditable" or "comfortable"

that the Established Church of this country should, without sufficient cause, continue, indirectly at least, to weaken the Established Church of England, and *vice versâ*, the Established Church of England continue to weaken the Established Church of this country, when the utmost strength and energies of both are required to stem the rising tide of sin and misery and infidelity, and, I will add, of Popery; or that the system for which Professor Mitchell contends, if it is to remain as it is, places its adherents out of all hope of communion—I do not say with the Church of Rome (for such reunion that Church itself has unhappily made impossible), but with the historical Churches of the East, and with the Churches of the Reformed Anglican communion throughout the world? Or, once more, where was the "credit" or the "comfort" when, in 1843, under the good providence of God, as if to bring us to a sense of our real condition, the loud thunder-clap of the Disruption took place, and nearly 500 ministers, with, in most cases, their respective flocks, quitted the fold; and when, thereupon, in almost every parish in the land, fellow-Christians and fellow-Presbyterians formed themselves into hostile camps, and warred against each other, I am afraid it must be said, almost more fiercely in many cases than they fought against the enemies of their common faith? I am old enough to remember when, in 1829, the Duke of Wellington, speaking in the House of Lords, told the country that it was going on "creditably and comfortably" under him and his Ministry, and that it did not require a Reform Bill. And what was the consequence? He not only ruined his own Ministry, and, for a time, the Tory party, but he brought the country to the verge of a civil war, which was only avoided by the passing of a Reform Bill more sweeping and comprehensive than, in all probability, would otherwise have been proposed.

In the foregoing remarks, I have honestly endeavoured to state the case of our Presbyterian brethren as fairly and fully as I could: and I hope I have succeeded. But

it may be well for us "Episcopalians" to remind ourselves that their present position admits of other topics of justification which ought not to be left out of sight. It is to be remembered that they did not originally discard, and separate themselves from, Episcopacy, until Episcopacy in this country, as in others (though in some to a less extent) had *abandoned its own true character*, by subjecting itself to the usurped domination, alike unscriptural and uncatholic, of the Head of a Foreign Church—the Church of Rome. It is true that since that original and most just assertion of their rightful liberties, they have twice separated themselves from Episcopacy as Anti-Papal and Reformed; but *on both occasions the provocation had been great*, because Episcopacy had in each case not only allied itself to, but become the instrument of, the civil power, when it was acting in a way plainly unconstitutional and despotic. These things, I repeat, are to be borne in mind by ourselves if we are to hope that our Presbyterian brethren will consent to combine with us in the well-understood polity of the primitive Church; and the fullest security must be given on our part that, so far as we can prevent it, neither the one usurpation nor the other shall ever be permitted to occur again.

But more than this. If we are to do justice to the brethren with whom we desire to become reunited, we must fully acknowledge that their *intention* in Ordination is the same as ours—viz.:—"To carry on the existence of a divinely-appointed ministry, a ministry deriving its authority not from the Church but from Christ, and through which, according to God's own plan, the blessings promised in His covenant, are conveyed to all the members of the body." So writes Professor Milligan, p. 47. Again, in opposition to the scheme of the Independents, he distinctly states:—"The Church, accordingly, is able to defend the existence of a ministry only by tracing it to a Divine command. And she has always done so." *Ibid.* And from this Divine command they have no thought of

separating. On the contrary, they cling to it no less than we do. There is, therefore, no *moral* difference between us; no *schismatical spirit* on the one side any more than on the other. The only difference lies in the interpretation of Scripture and of the history of the primitive Church; and what we have to do is, by mutual explanations and by friendly discussion, to endeavour to bring our respective interpretations into accordance as nearly as we can. As it is, there is little or no greater disagreement between many of us and many of them than there is between different schools of Anglican churchmen among themselves; and as the latter are able to live and worship together within the same communion, so there is no sufficient reason why the former should not be able to do the same.

Meanwhile, my object in this paper has been to offer one more contribution towards the elucidation of our own position, and at the same time to bring it as near as may be (consistently with adherence to sound principles, equally indispensable for both parties) to the position of our Presbyterian brethren. And what I have endeavoured more particularly to prove cannot be better summed up than in the words of Dr. Barry, now Primate of Australia, in his remarks upon the Preface of the Anglican Ordinal, in his "Teacher's Prayer Book":—"The one question, therefore, is, How did the development of the Episcopate take place? To this there are but three answers. By *usurpation*, of which there is no historical trace whatever; by *natural development*, which is, no doubt, true but insufficient, as may be seen by consideration of the development of Archbishopricks and Patriarchates, which never constituted a distinct Order; by *natural development with Apostolical authority* on the approaching withdrawal of the Apostolate; which is evidently the answer implied in the Preface, and *which has on its side not only universal ancient tradition, but also a large preponderance of probability*." I wish the reader particularly to observe what is said of

the second answer, concerning "natural development," viz. :—"It is no doubt true, but insufficient, as may be seen by consideration, &c." Much confusion is caused by losing sight of that *fact*—the fact that the three orders of the ministry are differentiated from all other ecclesiastical arrangements by Ordination. Our Presbyterian friends have great difficulty in realising this. They get perplexed on the one hand by the existence of Deans, Canons, Archdeacons, which *have nothing to do with the question of the ministry;* and, on the other hand, with Archbishops, Metropolitans, Patriarchs, which also *have nothing to do with the question of the ministry.* For no one of those offices is additional Ordination required.* A Church is complete, as regards its ministry, without any one of these, however much they may severally conduce, more or less, to its efficiency or to its dignity. And so it tends to create confusion of ideas, which it is most essential to avoid in this discussion, when, for instance, Dr. Milligan tells us first (p. 45) that "the question is one of historical development," and then (p. 48) speaks of "Deacons, Presbyters, Bishops, Metropolitans, Patriarchs" following each other, "in gradual succession," and ending in "the power of the Bishop of Rome, . . . when the development was complete." The confusion consists in this. No doubt there was such a development of *Ecclesiastical Organisation,* but there was no development of the *three-fold ministry.* So long as the Roman Empire and the Christian Church not only coexisted, but were substantially coextensive, there might be ground (partly political, and partly also ecclesiastical) for the former development; but when the Roman Empire was broken up, and still more when the Reformation came, and National Churches asserted their respective rights and liberties, the original occasion for it was in great measure

* The Ordinal of the Anglican Prayer Book contains a "form of ordaining or consecrating of an Archbishop or Bishop" (*i.e.*, the same for both, and only used for the former, in case an Archbishop is to be consecrated, who has not previously been a Bishop), but nothing further in an upward direction.

at an end; and it is never likely, we may safely assert, to recur again.

In what I have now written, I am no less conscious than Dr. Milligan was (p. 60), that I am not entitled to speak in any name except my own. But the labours of more than thirty years in the same cause give me some claim to ask that what I have said may be carefully and dispassionately weighed by those, upon either side, who have a right to judge, and are competent to guide the opinions of others. It would, indeed, be a blessed omen if the discussion could be carried on upon no other principle, and with no other aim, than this: that whatever is good in our own system may prevail and be retained, and that whatever is good in the Presbyterian system may prevail and be retained. Upon such a basis we might hope to come to the conclusion that to have kept up an unbrotherly separation for nearly 200 years, is *more than sufficient;* and that, when the Bicentenary of the Revolution arrives in 1890, we may be prepared to celebrate it in a way that will be acceptable to our common Lord and Saviour, and may obtain for ourselves His blessing upon the Peacemakers, when it shall be seen that a solid foundation has been laid towards securing our mutual reconciliation for the time to come.

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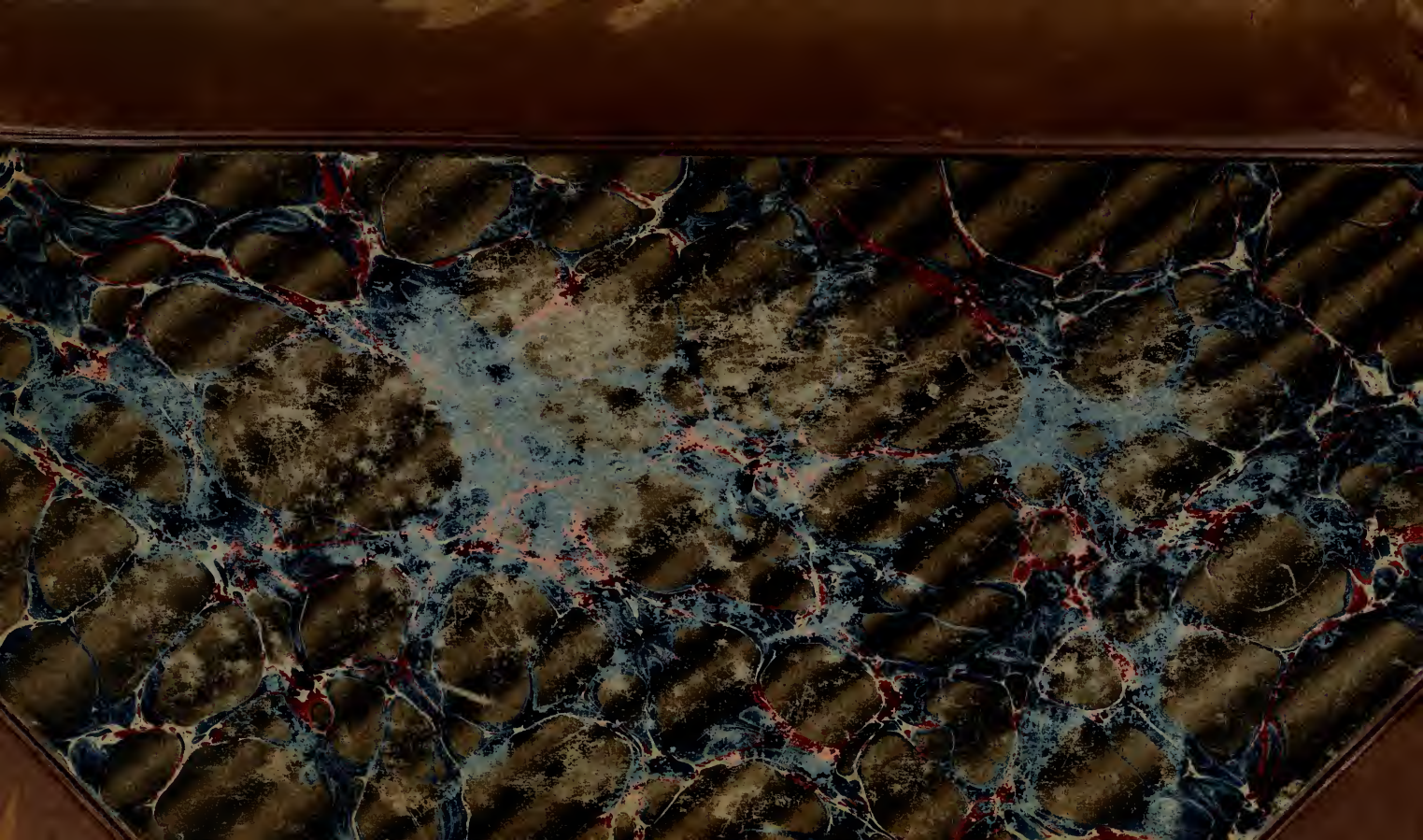
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